

Some people relax by lounging in a hot tub or listening to soft music while sitting in front of a fire. Dulcy Mahar, manager of BPA communications, relaxes by teaching a gardening class at Portland Community College. Mahar says, “Having something completely divorced from work is mentally relaxing. It’s a mental vacation.”

Mahar loves her BPA job and works long hours.

She makes time to teach because, she says, “It’s fun to turn people on to something you love.” She says she enjoys being a mentor and loves to see the spark in people when they realize they can do something they didn’t know they could do.

Mahar sees a correlation between teaching and managing. Both jobs are about “growing people,” she says. She believes both roles involve helping others develop ideas. She sees herself as a sounding board and a catalyst. She says, “Sometimes a staff person will have a great idea and just needs someone to say ‘Try it!’”

In her gardening class, Mahar finds that most people have the right instincts but lack confidence. They just need someone to say “do it.” So she tries to create an atmosphere, in both managing and teaching, in which people feel comfortable to grow and learn and challenge themselves.

Mahar has developed a reputation as a gardening expert in the Northwest. She gives gardening talks, writes a weekly garden column for *The Oregonian* and travels abroad to get inspiration and knowledge from gardens all over the world.

Mahar says she enjoys the democracy of gardening. People from all walks of life find pleasure in gardening, she says. When she rides the elevator at Portland headquarters and someone asks her a gardening question, Mahar says all the people in the elevator get involved in the conversation.

It doesn’t matter what their position or grade is, she says. “Gardening crosses all lines and makes

everyone equal,” Mahar says. That’s what she enjoys most. “It’s hard to be unhappy when talking about gardening,” she says.

Another BPA employee who makes time to teach is Tony White of the Power Business Line. White says he teaches because he loves “to see a light go on” when students understand a difficult concept. And White’s subject itself is one that many may find difficult. He teaches basic statistics and “technological innovation” to graduate students in public administration at Portland State University.

When White arrived at BPA in 1989, he already had a lot of teaching experience. He had taught at the University of Delaware, Mt. Hood Community College, Marylhurst University, Lewis & Clark College and Portland State University.

Since 1995, White has been secretary to the U. S. Entity that implements the Columbia River Treaty with Canada. He works with BPA Administrator Judi Johansen and General Carl Stock, division engineer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

White says one of the things he enjoys most about teaching is “taking a concept you know students are nervous about and making them want to go out and learn about it.” He says

he assumes every student starts out with an “A” on the first night. After that, he says, “It’s in the students’ control if they keep that A.”

Both Mahar and White say a teacher needs to be flexible and willing to make changes to meet a student’s need. They agree that to be a **good** teacher, you must know your subject. And Mahar says a sense of humor also helps.

When he’s not traveling to Canada for BPA this winter, Tony White will be teaching evening graduate classes at Portland State. And come this spring, you can take an evening gardening class that Mahar will teach at Portland Community College. Her program will include a tour of several Portland gardens. ◀

Nicia Balla is editor of *BPA This Week* and the *BPA Journal*

After hours classes suit these folks fine



Dulcy Mahar likes to teach gardening.

Mike Deason is a hot stick trainer

Mike Deason has an uncommon job. He’s one of only a handful of BPA people certified as live line hot stick trainers. And he’s so good at what he does that other utilities ask BPA to let Deason train their workers on high voltage lines.

Hot sticks are so named because workers use them to perform critical service on energized, or “hot,” power lines. Although they look like long sticks, they’re really tools. The tools are made with long rods of insulated fiberglass. Linemen use them like extended robot arms to work around the hot lines. So a utility doesn’t have to shut off electricity to an area to replace insulators or make other repairs.

Before he came to BPA in 1998 as a lineman, Deason worked for hot stick companies, including A.B. Chance of Missouri. For 11 years, he traveled throughout the western states. He demonstrated equipment and taught hot stick training. He is well known by Northwest power companies.

So when he came to BPA two years ago, Deason brought his hot stick expertise and reputation with him. Since then, he has been BPA’s high voltage hot stick trainer in the Snohomish region. He trains BPA linemen and people from other utilities through the joint BPA/Snohomish County PUD worker exchange program.

Snohomish recently recognized Deason for his “outstanding instruction.” Deason led a two-week hot stick program at the PUD’s center in Everett, Wash. (See the front page article on BPA’s exchange training).

Working around hot power lines can be risky business. But a lineman trained by Mike Deason will have the know-how to do the job well and safely. ◀



Mike Deason

January anniversaries

35 years

Philip A. Livesley, Public Utilities Specialist, Power Billing

30 years

Larry D. Mann, IS Projects Coordinator, Seattle
Sylvia M. Wynandt, Program Analyst, Accounting Operations, Portland
Thomas D. Huffman, Electrician Foreman III, Central Electrical Services, Vancouver
Archie Washington, Electrician, Substation Maintenance, Vancouver
William P. Winkoski, Electrician, Substation Maintenance, Bellingham
Robert C. Dewald, Substation Operator, Transmission Field Services– Kalispell
Larry R. Jones, Outage System Dispatcher, Munro Dispatch, Mead
Marsha L. Dejesus, Realty Specialist, Real Property Services, Portland

25 years

John P. Piccininni, Fish and Wildlife Team Coordinator, Environment Fish & Wildlife, Portland
Andrew J. Rapacz, Supervisory Public Utilities Specialist, Contract Generating Resources, Richland
Michael J. Gruber, Computer Specialist, Power Billing, Portland
Joanne P. Sutton, Office Manager, Construction & Maintenance, Vancouver
Ronald J. Rhode, Electrician Foreman III, Central Electrical Services, Vancouver
Suzanne H. Sivyer, Architect, Facility Development, Portland
Gary L. Mentze, Data Systems Craftsman II, Control Center Hardware Maintenance, Vancouver

20 years

Lester L. Davidson, Computer Specialist, Application Services, Portland
Nancy H. Weintraub, Environmental Specialist, Environmental Analysis, Portland

Valerie A. Lefler, Financial Analyst, Financial Analysis & Requirements, Portland
Connie M. Howard, Public Utilities Specialist, Generation Supply Portland
Russell C. May, Electrician Foreman I, Central Electrical Services, Vancouver
Joseph T. Renner, Electronics Engineer, Transmission Field Services, The Dalles
Correne A. Surface, Public Utilities Specialist, Transmission Supply, Vancouver
Timothy D. Laughlin, Electrical Engineer, Control and Protection, Portland
Donald L. Ruff, Structural Engineer, Transmission Lines, Portland

10 years

Rebecca A. Dinsmore, Public Utilities Specialist, Generation Scheduling, Portland
Michael G. Hoffman, Market Lead – International, Transmission Business Line, Portland
Diane Cherry, Public Utilities Specialist, Power Products, Pricing and Rates, Portland
Norman C. Berry, Power System Control Craftsman, Snohomish
William D. Spalding, Electrician, Substation Maintenance, The Dalles
Eric Crider, Electronics Engineer, Bell Substation, Bellingham
William J. Ramonas, Commodity Manager, Materials Management, Vancouver
Michael J. Baca, Electrical Engineer, Test & Energization, Vancouver
Kevin M. Smith, System Dispatcher, Munro Dispatch, Mead

February anniversaries

35 years

Dwight M. Raikoglio, Supervisory General Engineer, Construction & Maintenance Services, Vancouver
Freddie M. Viray, Carpenter, General Craft Services, Vancouver
Carson W. Taylor, Electrical Engineer, Network Planning, Vancouver

30 years

Robert W. Beraud, Environmental Analysis Manager, Environment Fish & Wildlife, Portland
Veronica L. Williams, Senior Policy Advisor, Human Resources, Diversity & EEO, Portland
Charles W. Marsh, Chief Substation Operator III, Transmission Field Services, Burley
Lindsay D. Bruce, Electrician, Substation Maintenance, Covington
Lawrence V. Slate, Senior Substation Operator, Transmission Field Services, Colfax
Jennifer W. Gronvold, Realty Specialist, Real Estate Field Services, Portland

25 years

Cheryl A. Larson, Power Business Line Executive Assistant, Portland
John M. White, Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic, Transmission Field Services, Chemawa
Kurt V. Dobin, System Protection Control Craftsman II, Transmission Field Services, Franklin
Gerald E. Stangel, Power System Control Craftsman II, Transmission Field Services, Redmond
Guy A. Gansereit, Electrician, Substation Maintenance, Schultz
Douglas J. Lamb, Electrical Engineer, Transmission Lines, Portland
Sheryl L. Emerson, Computer Specialist, Control Center Software Design, Vancouver

20 years

Kurt E. Olds, Computer Specialist, Information Technology Integration, Portland
David P. Barringer, Budget Analyst, Financial Forecasting & Budget, Portland
Sylvia L. Jensen-Fewel, Attorney, Portland
Roy B. Fox, Manager, Federal Hydro Projects, Generation Supply, Portland
Philip W. Thor, Public Utilities Specialist, Federal Hydro Projects, Portland
Rodney A. Aho, Customer Account Executive, Eastern Power Business Area, Idaho Falls
Ronald T. White, Facilities Maintenance Worker, Transmission Field Services, Franklin
Nancy L. Jacobsen, Substation Operator, Transmission Field Services, Celilo

William C. Latimer, Electrician Foreman II, Transmission Field Services, Celilo
Francis T. Vukelich, Electrician, Substation Maintenance, Celilo
Henry Fuller Jr., Materials Handler, Material Handling & Transportation, Vancouver
Victoria M. Pederson, Public Utilities Specialist, Transmission Supply, Vancouver
Mark T. McLean, Computer Specialist, Control Center Software Design, Vancouver

10 years

Elaine S. Stratton, Environmental Specialist, Pollution Prevention & Abatement, Vancouver
Betty J. Olsgaard, Public Utilities Specialist, Energy Efficiency Customer Services, Seattle
Deborah A. Becker, Public Utilities Specialist, Bulk Power Marketing, Portland

Anniversary & Retirement

Charles K. (Rick) Gadd, Manager of Media Services, had 35 years of service in November and retired Nov. 26.

Retirements

Roy B. Moad, Senior System Dispatcher, Munro Dispatch, retired Dec. 1 with 32 years service.
Raymond L. Classen, EER, PBL, Energy Efficiency retired Dec. 20 with 14 years service
Wayne A. Larson, Technical Service Supervisor, Operations Services, retired Dec. 27 with 31 years service.
Foster E. Johns, Substation Operator, Transmission Field Services, retired Dec. 31 with 29 years service.
S.J. Pongracz-Bartha, Electrical Engineer, Generation Supply, retired Dec. 31 with 39 years service.
Shirley J. Staggs, Executive Correspondence Coordinator, Executive Office, retired Dec. 31 with 20 years service.
Melvin L. Barness, Chief, Substation Operator III, Transmission Field Services, retired Dec. 31 with 33 years service.